



Working Against Violence

Why Should Businesses Be Concerned About Domestic Violence?

- At any time, approximately 10 percent of employees in a workplace will be dealing with domestic violence.
- As a result, employers lose an estimated \$3 to \$5 billion each year due to decreased productivity and increased health care costs among victims.
- Companies that don't protect their employees on the job may be subject to OSHA sanctions or legal liability.
- Domestic violence affects the morale of all employees, particularly those who may have to take on additional work or fear for their own safety.
- Domestic violence perpetrators miss work due to court appearances, incarceration and other activities directly related to their perpetration, causing lost productivity at their businesses.
- Abusers often use their employer's property, including company phones, e-mail and vehicles, in committing their crimes.
- Employers need to recognize and become knowledgeable about domestic violence as a workplace issue and then take appropriate action.

What Can Businesses Do?

1. Develop a clear, proactive plan for dealing with domestic violence involving legal, human resources and security departments, unions, employees and local law enforcement.
2. Train supervisors and upper management to spot and address signs of abuse. Local domestic violence service providers can assist with this training.
3. Incorporate domestic violence awareness information into employee communications, including orientation programs, handbooks and newsletters.
4. Prepare security teams to assist victims of domestic violence by providing escorts to and from the office, secure parking and work spaces, call screening, and other services.
5. Educate employees about security procedures to keep them from inadvertently giving batterers access to victims.
6. Work with victims to develop an individualized safety plan without making assistance contingent upon any action by the abused (e.g., leaving the batterer).
7. Allow human resources professionals to offer paid time off, flexible hours, or new shifts to victims, so that they can avoid or flee their batterers, seek social service assistance, or deal with legal matters.
8. Provide information about local domestic violence service providers through human resources professionals and employee assistance programs.
9. Promote national or local domestic violence hotline numbers through pay stubs, bathroom posters, information cards and e-mails.
10. Network with other employers to share case studies and best practices.

Ask. Refer. Support.